

Two on a Tour

By TROY ALLISON.

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The elevator of the Washington monument reached the ground after its solemnly slow descent of twenty minutes, and Rhoda Jamison, feeling somewhat overawed by the world as seen from the top of the monument, sat down on a bench near the elevator door. She needed a few minutes to readjust her thoughts and to plan for the rest of the day.

Rhoda had saved every possible penny from her salary during the school term in order to take this Washington trip and had determined to crowd as much sightseeing into her ten days as any other Washington tourist had ever done.

She had spent hours with the visiting milliner in her town planning every detail of the time and had finally arrived in the city and taken a cab directly to the quiet lodgings she had recommended. The milliner had, however, forgotten to take into consideration the fact that the girl had never been accustomed to a city and to city ways and had therefore failed to prepare her for the feeling of desolation and loneliness that grew more and more oppressive every minute.

The Congressional library had satisfied her love of elegance, the capitol and the White House had seemed like old friends from the pictures in the geography and history from which she had taught for months, but in her classes she had been the personality. Here she seemed to dwindle into nothingness, and the things that had been more ideas and pictures towered over her oppressively, and she was overcome by her fittleness and her loneliness and longed for some one to speak to her with a hint of friendly interest.

The big, broad shouldered man sitting on the other end of the bench she had seen walking down the steps of the monument. He had evidently felt so secure in his superior physical strength that he walked down to examine more closely the inscriptions on the stones that could not be studied so well from the elevator.

She saw him take a fountain pen from his pocket, adjust it and finally sort a package of souvenir post cards and begin writing industriously.

She remembered the package she had bought to send her pupils, so she took her own pen from her hand bag and commenced racking her brain for little things to write that would amuse them.

The postal she liked best of all, a daintily colored view of the monument itself, she addressed to her mother. Across it she wrote, "It's so very big, and I feel so little and so lonely."

She leaned forward to flit a bit of dust from the tip of her pen, and a whiff of air blew the postal from her lap and left it lying at the big man's feet.

He saw it there and, thinking he had dropped one of his own, stooped and picked it up, reading it leisurely.

"I feel so little and lonely," he read, and, surprised, turned to meet the flushed face of the girl.

"It's mine," she said, holding out her hand for it.

"Do you feel that way, too?" he asked eagerly. "That's me exactly."

"I shouldn't have called you really 'little,'" she answered, with the frank friendliness of a girl who had never met with a circumstance that would cause her to be suspicious of humanity.

"I reckon you are referring to the first part of the sentence. 'It is so big' would really seem more suitable."

"That's right," he laughed, looking at the postal, "but that just proves that I can hold more loneliness than you, for I am feeling lonely from the soles of my feet to the top of my new felt hat."

"I bought in Carson City to see the sights of Washington."

"At least you are farther from home than I. I'm from South Carolina," she chatted, three days' absence from conversation having left her with a surplus on hand.

"I was just sending some of these things to the boys," he said. "They are living in a shack near mine, and it will take 'em immensely to get these pictures of civilization. You see, we had been out there for two years digging away for gold without any success, and just as we'd fallen into a fit of gloom and shame in grub, why, we struck it rich!"

"How lovely! Did you find it in chunks?" Her eyes sparkled like a child's.

"That's about the size of it," he laughed, with a whole souled heartiness he hadn't experienced for days. "We sure found it in large sized pieces, and I just thought I'd take a vacation to see the world. I've never been east before."

"Do you like it?" She failed to put as much doubt as to the charms of Washington in her tone as she might have put half an hour earlier.

"I've been about the loneliest person the dome ever shadowed. I could get on very well in the daytime, but I've wanted to sit round the fire at night and talk it over with the boys. How long are you going to stay?" he asked eagerly.

"Ten days. I've been here three." His face lengthened visibly.

"I'll be here a whole month," he added dolefully. "Why don't you stay longer?"

"You see I haven't struck it rich—in huge chunks. The trustees of my school are rather a parsimonious lot."

"I don't know much about eastern etiquette, but I wonder if it wouldn't be tolerably proper for us to do some sightseeing together this afternoon?" he said with a touch of boyish shyness.

"I wonder," she said slowly.

The joy of companionship settled the question for them, and he called at her boarding house morning after morning, guidebook in hand, the plan for the day already laid out.

They had left the trip to Arlington for the last afternoon of her stay, and they wandered through the grounds, more beautiful than ever in their early summer foliage, until they reached the spot overlooking the Potomac, where the tall shaft rises in honor of the

heroes of the Spanish war.

"This is the loveliest spot of all," he said, as they sat down on the grassy slope with their faces turned toward the river. "Washington will seem dead after I put you on the train this afternoon. Have you enjoyed this week, little woman?" a slight nervousness in his voice.

"It has been—perfect," she said softly. "After I had you to talk to the crowds didn't seem unfriendly at all—they changed into a set of good natured passersby."

"I—er—haven't seemed to miss the boys much lately, either," he said, absently, watching her slender fingers arrange the largest daisies and clover leaves that she found near her, "but I'll go to missing them again the very minute your train pulls out this afternoon."

He sat up straight suddenly and looked at her almost sternly.

"Do you think a man ought to be forgiven for telling a lie?" he demanded abruptly.

Her face paled slightly, and her eyes were large with a fear that he might in some way confess himself unworthy of the friendly confidence she had placed in him. The unconventionality of their acquaintance stood out in her mind, suddenly, as viewed from the world's standpoint.

"You haven't—lied to me?" she asked faintly.

"Absolutely! No one ever told a bigger one," he said, with his eyes fixed on the clover leaves, failing to see her pallor, "for it will not be the boys I'll be missing, it will be—just you."

Her color came back with a rush, and she avoided his eyes as she rose hastily to her feet, the daisies and clover leaves falling to the ground.

"I'm sure I will be late for my train if we don't hurry back," she said abruptly.

"I absolutely wish you would miss it—it seems a shame that you cannot afford to stay longer when I have more money than I can possibly spend—unless the town will let me build 'em another library. You couldn't let me—"

"No, I couldn't," she blazed, catching his half formed idea.

"There—there—little woman—don't get huffy. I suppose I do bump up against conventionalities occasionally, but somehow I hate for you not to have everything you want," he blurted out.

Her eyes softened, and when they reached the station she watched his broad shoulders as he elbowed his way through the crowd at the ticket office and wondered why, now her face was turned homeward, she should feel more homesick than ever.

When he had put her on the train, he leaned over and spoke determinedly.

"I'm coming to South Carolina before I go back west."

She didn't answer, and he took from his coat pocket one of the clover leaves she had dropped on the ground at Arlington and held it up before her. She saw it had four leaves.

"Do you know what I am going to wish? That when I go back west—you'll go with me," he waited, a big, awkward boy in his embarrassment, for her to look at him.

"I—the train is starting," she said, holding out her hand hastily, "but—if one finds a four leaf clover—he is supposed to get his wish."

Fox and Gibbon.

When the furniture of Charles James Fox, the famous English orator and statesman, was sold by auction, there was among the books a copy of the first volume of Gibbon's Roman history.

It appeared by the title page that the book had been presented by the author to Fox, but no considerations of sentiment deterred the recipient from writing on the fly leaf this anecdote:

"The author at Brooks' said there was no salvation for this country until six heads of the principal persons in administration were laid on the table. Eleven days after this same gentleman accepted a place of lord of trade, under those very ministers and has acted with them ever since."

Such was the avidity of bidders anxious to secure the least scrap of the writing and composition of the famous owner of the copy that owing to the addition of this little record the book sold for 3 guineas, a large sum for the times.

Better Than the Music.

In one of the Australian mining camps in the old days there were no women and children, only the hard, horny handed men who fought with the earth in the attempt to wrest from it the yellow gold. To the camp there came a band of wandering musicians, and with the band were the wife and baby of one of the members. A grand concert was planned in the big saloon, and a fine dashing programme was given.

But in the midst the baby began to cry.

In an instant a tall Irishman was on his feet.

"Shut up the music," he commanded, "shut up the music and let's hear the baby cry."—Baltimore American.

To Wash Down Quilts.

Down quilts and small feather or down pillows which have become soiled can be washed at home with very little trouble and expense.

First choose a good day, for the drying is half the battle, and you need plenty of sunshine and a gentle wind. Use lukewarm water, and one of the many pure soaps that are now in the market, and avoid a washboard. It will not be of any help and it will certainly pull your quilt or pillow out of shape.

Rub thoroughly with the soap, squeezing and patting it with your hands as you might fine woolen underwear; rinse in two or three clear waters, and hang out to dry in the sunlight. A dash of salt in the water will prevent it from fading.

Appreciative.

"Do you enjoy having your wife make public speeches?"

"Certainly," answered Mr. Meekton. "I think it is rather kind of Henrietta to lecture the public instead of me."—Washington Star.

THESE CITIES AGAINST IT.

Municipal Ownership Turned Down in Various Places.

The voters of Colorado City have refused to sanction a bond issue for a municipal lighting plant.

The proposition to bond Willitsville, Ill., for an electric light plant was defeated at a recent election.

The city council of South Sharon, Pa., has decided not to issue bonds for an electric light plant.

Lake Forest, Ill., voted down the proposition to buy the works of the Lake Forest Water company. The vote stood 292 to 68.

The Pittsburg (Kan.) Headlight states that at a recent election the proposition to bond the city for the purchase of the waterworks was defeated by 836 to 303.

The Waterloo (Ia.) Reporter states that Strawberry Point, in that state, after employing experts to investigate the matter has decided against a municipal light plant and in favor of a franchise.

The final abandonment of municipal ownership by Muncie, Ind., is an assured fact. The machinery of the electric light plant, which broke down a year ago after being in operation fourteen years, has been sold at a fraction of its cost. The city had invested \$30,000 in the plant.

Apparently the voters of Bryan, O., do not regard municipal ownership as so much of a success that they want more of it, for they have defeated an ordinance providing for a bond issue of \$40,000 for the improvement of the lighting and water plants. This illustrates one of the evil results of the system, for the money was needed to equip the plants with new and more economical machinery.

Van W. Welsh, village clerk of Beverly, O., writes as follows in response to a request for the reasons for the sale by that village of its electric light plant: "Will say the greatest reason for selling the plant was that the village could get no satisfactory service from plant in the manner it was being handled. The plant has been sold to local parties with the hope of getting better service in the future."

Rutherford, N. J., has decided not to go into the lighting business. This decision was reached at a public meeting called by the mayor to act upon the report of a committee of citizens which had been for a year making a thorough investigation of the subject. The report was unfavorable to the establishment of either a gas or an electric light plant and stated that "there have been more failures than successes." There was no hostility to municipal ownership as a theory, but a grave doubt as to its practicability.

GETTING READY TO SELL.

Valley City, N. D., and Souderton, Pa., Tired of Their Electric Lighting Plants.

Valley City, N. D., has decided by a vote of nearly three to one to sell its electric light plant, every ward in the city voting in favor of the sale. In explaining the cause of this action a local banker writes that, like most such enterprises, the Valley City plant "has become a burden to the city" and "has been furnishing poor lights for the past two years. For this reason and because of increasing prices many have deserted the service."

The dissatisfaction with the service has been growing a long time. Two attempts were made to dispose of it three years ago. The first bids were rejected as being too low. The next bid, accepted by the council, was not in accordance with the specifications, and another bidder secured an injunction restraining the sale. Many business houses have installed private gasoline lighting systems of their own.

According to the Electrical World, the town council of Souderton, Pa., is considering the proposition of abandoning the borough electric light plant and purchasing electricity to operate the borough lighting system. The West Telford Electric company having offered to furnish electric energy at a lower price than the borough can manufacture it.

Why Committee Reported Adversely.

An unfavorable report on municipal ownership was made to the city council of Kaukauna, Wis., by an ad hoc committee that visited Bellefontaine, Columbus, Richmond, Reesville and Evansville. Alderman Martin said the lighting plant at Bellefontaine cost \$73,000, that the city owes \$222,000 bonded debts and has a tax rate of 4 per cent. The city owns waterworks, gas and electric lighting plants, conducts extensive improvements and pays its public officials high salaries for tending the plants.

Alderman Martin further says that in other cities, in the effort to make a good showing, plants are allowed to run down until the amount they are bonded for would not be covered by the present value of the property.—Municipal Journal and Engineer.

Covering Up Wastefulness.

The present evil of municipal ownership is the extravagance of political management of industries. This is generally masked by putting part of the cost on the taxpayers by borrowing money on the credit of the city or spending it out of the general revenues. The ultimate and oppressive evil of municipal ownership as illustrated in the history of British provincial cities is the steady progress toward bankruptcy made by continually increasing the city's debt to render all kinds of service to the public at a constant loss, continually made up by taxation and borrowing till the city's credit is gone.—From an Editorial in Minneapolis Tribune.

The Right Name.

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A TRUE REMEDY IS NEEDED

Constitutional Amendment Will Relieve Taxpayers.

Business Men Make Convincing Arguments to the Tax Commission of Ohio—They Favor Classification of Property.

When representatives of boards of trade of Ohio cities made a combined appeal to the Tax Commission of Ohio, last month, for relief from injustice of the present tax laws, they came fortified with arguments that were practically unanswerable.

Below are given excerpts from the arguments made to the commission:

Edward L. Buchwalter of the Springfield Commercial club:

"This is an important subject and I realize how difficult it is to suggest changes under our present state constitution that would be legal, that would remove the many unjust features of our present tax laws and that would make it possible for taxpayers to submit tax returns that would be reasonably accurate and just. We can not expect to successfully revise and perfect our tax laws until we amend our state constitution. The constitutional provisions for taxing property enacted more than 40 years ago are not adapted to present conditions. We should amend the constitution and give to our legislative body the power to enact tax laws."

Chas. U. Shryock of the Zanesville Chamber of Commerce:

"It is well that this commission should hear an exhaustive discussion of the matter, and let their recommendations be such as will appeal to the common sense of the voter, who must of necessity decide what shall be done. If our constitution is to be changed, but don't propose elasticity. Let the lines be straight, the rules rigid, and not a lot of open questions to be decided by new methods left for each legislature to juggle with, and the courts to pass upon."

While opposing elasticity, I favor publicity. If attached to our present tax laws was a provision for the publication of every tax return, there would be less cause of complaint. The most successful churches in the world publish a list of contributors, and they are all voluntary associations. How much more important is the amount which every property owner must contribute toward the cost of government."

C. A. Malone of the Chillicothe Board of Trade:

With the purpose in mind of representing as fully as possible the views and sentiments of the merchants and manufacturers of our locality, I addressed a communication to several gentlemen asking to be advised of any thoughts or suggestions in relation to taxation."

It is unanimously agreed among them that the taxing system of Ohio is a most deplorable failure. It comes to accomplishing the purpose for which it is intended—the raising of sufficient revenue for the needs of the state in a just proportion from each and all of its citizens."

We are perfectly willing and feel safe in submitting the whole matter to the good judgment of your commission. If in your wisdom, after being fully advised in the premises, you shall find that our state constitution should be so amended as to exempt certain kinds of property from taxation to encourage and increase business and for the general good, I am fully confident your action will be approved and the recommendations cheerfully and heartily supported by those whom I represent, provided certain property interests in our state which are not now paying any taxes at all are made to bear their just proportion of governmental expenses by proper taxation."

K. L. Coburn of the Salem Business Association:

Amend the constitution so that property may be classified for taxation purposes. Put money, notes, mortgages, bonds, etc., which are listed at their nominal or face value on a flat rate of not to exceed 10 mills on the dollar.

Separate state and local taxes. Formulate a new board to list all property in the county, whether it belongs to a corporation, firm or individual, railroad, streetcar company or steamship line. Give them sufficient authority to insure the listing of all property in each county, have it listed in a uniform manner in each county, and abolish the offices of assessor and board of equalization."

Limit the rate that local officials can tax listed property to about one-half the present statutory authority—and when you are not too busy come over to Salem and be entertained by the Business Association of Salem, O., and we will all be content."

F. A. Hartenstein, Youngstown Chamber of Commerce:

It is generally supposed that the concealers of taxes are the corporations. I want to say to you that in Mahoning county I think return their credits for taxation at a pretty fair, equitable value, that will compare very favorably with anybody else in the county; but private individuals as a rule do not return their money and credits as they should."

While there is a good bid sentiment abroad which says that state and local levies should be divorced, yet it seems to me it is a dangerous thing to do that. The Willis law brings many hundreds of thousands of dollars every year into the state of which the county knows nothing. We don't know how much is collected. We can't find out how much is collected. And that with the proposed franchise tax law, which nearly everybody agrees are going to have, and undoubtedly a great many of us think we ought to have, will produce so large a revenue that in the opinion of a large many people it might foster extravagance in the legislature. We know there have been legislatures in the past which have been extravagant; there might again be a legislature in the future that might be extravagant. If there is no check upon it by which locally the people can find out how much money there is in the state treasury, it will foster extravagance."

I think we are all agreed in Mahoning county there should be a classification of property for taxation."

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